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# Discussion paper contributed by the children and youth major group

*Summary*

Within the United Nations Forum on Forests and in the context of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, the children and youth major group is advocating for education and intergenerational equity: education as a tool to transfer knowledge from the one generation to the other and to learn how, for example, to deal sustainably with our forests. Intergenerational equity as a concept emphasizes the importance of the forests of today, with all the services and products they provide, which should also be available for future generations. Both of these are well reflected in the non-legally binding instrument. The importance of education and capacity-building is stressed in five paragraphs of that instrument. That sustainable forest management is a key factor for intergenerational equity is agreed upon as a concept, inter alia, in the four global objectives of the instrument.

This is an encouraging message. However, time is running short. The children and youth major group is concerned about the successful implementation of the non-legally binding instrument. The variety of threats to forests is increasing rather than decreasing. Loss of forest cover and climate change make us worry about future opportunities for a growing number of young people worldwide, in particular in rural areas of developing countries. We therefore call for action. The content of the non-legally binding instrument has good potential, but its implementation has to take off. Therefore, sufficient resources should be mobilized to actually make the agreement on forests start to work. To make resources flow from investing to receiving countries, trust and transparency are needed, which can only be achieved when a detailed monitoring and reporting plan is executed.

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# I. Introduction

1. Since the third session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the children and youth major group has been actively involved in the processes of the Forum, in particular by submitting inputs addressing key issues for youth and children and voicing their priorities for sustainable forest management.

2. The primary objective of youth participation is to promote intergenerational equity in sustainable forest management through education, the transfer of knowledge and the right to access natural resources for the younger generations. Specifically, the goals of the participation of the youth and child representatives are:

(a) To use their capacity as a worldwide youth network to inform the policy dialogue debate from the perspective of young people;

(b) To demonstrate the potential of forest-related education in the implementation of sustainable forest management and international forest policy processes;

(c) To advocate ways to increase that potential;

(d) To promote the need and opportunities for stronger integration of forest-related education in the international forest policy dialogue at all levels.

3. At the Forum's eighth session, we would like to review the priorities of young people and assess the way they have been addressed by decision makers.

4. The present discussion paper has been compiled by the children and youth major group focal point team (International Forestry Students' Association, Global Youth Network and Initiatives-Jeunes) with the assistance of their network members.

# II. Priority areas for action

## A. Education and capacity-building

5. Education is a human right (article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). Formal and informal forest education has a multiplying effect on the development of young people and their communities. Primary education is important in ensuring that children are affected at the most foundational stage in their lives; secondary education is important for raising environmental awareness among young people and educating them about ecosystems; and tertiary education is critical for ensuring the integrity of skills among foresters, the scientific community and other forest-related stakeholders.

6. Member States should support informal forest education by enhancing the capacity of youth organizations to carry out educational programmes. Young people are often highly motivated to contribute to the development of society, having fresh ideas and innovative approaches. Youth as a demographic can effectively contribute to the implementation of sustainable development, including sustainable forest management.

7. Education is the key to making wise decisions about the future of the world's forests, as it is central to enabling children and youth to understand and

communicate the link between using up resources today and the need to access them in the future in order to sustain their livelihoods. Criteria and indicators need to reflect the extent to which education has been integrated into national forest programmes and the national sustainable development agenda.

8. The children and youth major group believes that enhancing education and capacity-building, especially among young people, raises awareness and knowledge about forests and should therefore constitute a crucial addition to State and public and private sector efforts.

9. To work towards this, Member States are strongly encouraged to implement the promises they committed to in the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (General Assembly resolution 62/98, annex) on quality forestry education and capacity-building quoted below:

**National policies and measures**

> "Promote and encourage access to formal and informal education, extension and training programmes on the implementation of sustainable forest management (non-legally binding instrument, para. 6 (u))
>
> "Support education, training and extension programmes involving local and indigenous communities, forest workers and forest owners, in order to develop resource management approaches that will reduce the pressure on forests, particularly fragile ecosystems (para. 6 (v))
>
> "Promote active and effective participation by major groups, local communities, forest owners and other relevant stakeholders in the development, implementation and assessment of forest-related national policies, measures and programmes (para. 6 (w))
>
> "Establish or strengthen partnerships, including public-private partnerships, and joint programmes with stakeholders to advance the implementation of sustainable forest management" (para. 6 (m))

**International cooperation and means of implementation**

> "Strengthen the capacity of countries to address forest-related illegal practices, including wildlife poaching, in accordance with domestic legislation, through enhanced public awareness, education, institutional capacity-building ..." (non-legally binding instrument, para. 7 (j))

10. Constructive intergenerational cooperation is what the basis of a common future is built upon. In order to frame this future sustainably, solution-oriented approaches are needed that require pragmatic gateways to participation for youth and children. Failing to implement the commitments in the non-legally binding instrument means aborting the last chance to set these up.

11. The non-legally binding instrument can only be taken seriously if Member States are motivated to stick to their promises and compel each other to do so, inter alia, through mutual monitoring and reporting agreements.

### B. Climate change

12. The substantial contribution of ongoing deforestation to climate change is a major concern. In the upcoming decades, the effects of climate change will be suffered in particular by rural communities in developing countries, where building up a sustainable future will become even harder and children will suffer the most.

### C. Stopping deforestation

13. Ongoing deforestation and unsustainable use of forests leads to a growing number of people living in poverty or facing a poor future. Children are particularly affected, as this often prevents them from attending school.

14. With the predicted increase in global population, the pressure on forests will merely increase, leading to more people living in poverty. This means that even more children will face an insecure future.

### D. Participation

15. Forest issues and their complexity often exclude the uninformed young person concerned with the environment. It must be pointed out, however, that these young people still have the capacity, the basic knowledge and the motivation to contribute constructively to meeting the objectives of the Forum.

16. We regard the promotion of cross-sector cooperation as a key element of effective stakeholder participation and seek to foster the involvement of teaching and research institutions in decision-making processes. This translates into Member States fostering a national atmosphere that supports the growth of non-governmental organizations and collaboration.

## III. Assessment of the United Nations Forum on Forests process

17. We welcome the opportunity given to young people to have a voice in the United Nations Forum on Forests through the multi-stakeholder dialogue. We are pleased by the increasing attention being paid to forest issues at the international level, but at the same time concerned by the relatively marginal impact this has had on deforestation. We would like to see a more political will to implement previous commitments and the non-legally binding instrument.

18. We fear that while forests become increasingly distant to urban youth, the linkages get weaker and the recognition of forests as a natural part of the living environment is diminished. Young people's access to forests should be ensured and facilitated in order to avoid a loss of interest in and connection to nature. Overall recognition of forests as a natural part of society should be enhanced, as should the role of local communities in forest management. The well-being of communities, fostered through ownership in forest management, directly influences the well-being of their children and young people.

**National policies and measures**

"Promote and strengthen public understanding of the importance of and the benefits provided by forests and sustainable forest management, including through public awareness programmes and education" (non-legally binding instrument, para. 6 (t))

# IV. Recommendations on a financing mechanism and framework for sustainable forest management

19. **In applying means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity-building and the transfer of environmentally sound technology, the children and youth major group considers the following to be essential:**

(a) The creation of partnerships with local authorities, youth, children and stakeholders with a view to building the capacity of youth forest-related organizations at the local level;

(b) The establishment of criteria and indicators that reflect the status of education within national forest programmes and the status of forestry within national education curricula;

(c) The inclusion of youth and children stakeholders and tertiary education stakeholders in the design, implementation and evaluation of national forest programmes.

20. **For a decision on a voluntary global financial mechanism, a portfolio approach and a forest financing framework, the children and youth major group regards the following aspects as important:**

(a) Finance has to be taken seriously by investing and receiving countries. This means that donating countries should mobilize resources to the extent necessary to make the defined goals and objectives of the non-legally binding instrument (including the four global objectives on forests) a reality. For the countries that receive donations to work on their programmes, a clear and practical framework should be set up for indicators and monitoring;

(b) Children and youth are unable to provide financial resources, but they have repeatedly emphasized their value as ground staff in implementation if taken seriously as partners. We can provide a global educational network of students as a resource to provide both views and future collaboration among young people in implementation at the regional and subregional levels, as well as strong links to higher educational institutions as centres for both technological and scientific research and capacity-building around the world;

(c) Children and youth consider a portfolio approach to be a very concrete instrument for moving forward, as it is a way to translate global negotiations into action on the spot. However, we urge the subscribers to the non-legally binding instrument to start to define what and who is included in the portfolio. This instrument can do its job only when clearly defined.

## V. Forests in a changing environment

21. **Talking about forests with respect to biodiversity conservation, including protected areas, the children and youth major group considers the following to be essential:**

(a) Forest conservation is closely linked to forest management practices that are adapted to climate change. Beyond the question of how far vegetation will be capable of readjusting to a changing climate in due time, diversity is a key prerequisite to provide forests with a broad reaction capacity;

(b) Children and youth therefore stress the need to preserve biodiversity and structural heterogeneity in forest ecosystems in accordance and association with the Convention on Biodiversity.

22. **To reverse the loss of forest cover, prevent forest degradation in all types of forest and combat desertification, including in low-forest-cover countries, the children and youth major group considers the following to be essential:**

(a) People living in rural areas suffer the most. The lack of alternative sources of food, fodder, firewood and income accelerates trees being cut, creating conditions under which regrowth does not take place;

(b) The only answer to this is sustainable forest management. To efficiently use, systematically maintain and methodically regenerate forest resources, forest inventories and forest management and afforestation plans have to be developed and implemented together with the civil society in place. Joint efforts have to result in purposeful communication and an even-handed sharing of benefits;

(c) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is often seen as a very successful instrument when it comes to political will and financial resources. It also covers forests and therefore could play an important future role in conserving forests. Children and youth want to emphasize that forests have more functions than sequestrating carbon and that therefore a strong implementation of the non-legally binding instrument is just as essential as a successful climate framework.

23. **For achieving the four global objectives on forests and implementing the non-legally binding instrument, enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination and regional and subregional inputs, the children and youth major group emphasizes the importance of:**

(a) Poor people in developing countries will especially suffer the effects of unsustainable forest use. Sustainably managed forests can offer long-term sources of income and a sustainable future for this group, if they are given the legal right to use and tend forest resources;

(b) Forests are perhaps the most precious resource on our planet. They are essentially renewable and they offer numerous products and services to billions of people. People depend on these forests and have no future without them. Only worldwide sustainable management and conservation of our forest resources will give future generations a chance to continue benefiting from this resource;

(c) Linkages between regional meetings and the United Nations Forum on Forests through regionally existing structures are an obvious way to further improve

knowledge on forests and sustainable forest management as defined in the global objectives. They should promote bidirectional communication not only from decision maker to decision maker, but also decision maker to the people working on the ground, at all levels.

## VI. Conclusions and recommendations

24. **Forest areas worldwide are decreasing rather than increasing. This means that more and more people who depend on forests for their livelihoods, in particular in developing countries, are facing an unsustainable future. Climate change (largely brought about by deforestation) will even speed this process up. Education is under double pressure, as increasing poverty for a growing number of people reduces access to education every day, yet education on how to use resources sustainably is a key factor in maintaining forests for future generations.**

25. **To make the United Nations Forum on Forests and the non-legally binding instrument work, we have the following recommendations:**

(a) **Involve youth in implementing sustainable forest management;**

(b) **Educate youth and children so that they know how to carefully take care of their resources;**

(c) **Create criteria and indicators for forestry education;**

(d) **Do not count on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change when it comes to protection. Forests are more than carbon and will have a sustainable future only when the United Nations Forum on Forests is successful;**

(e) **Make sure that loss of forest cover is stopped by implementing sustainable forest management worldwide by:**

(i) **Implementing the non-legally binding instrument;**

(ii) **Starting to define the actors for and scale of the portfolio approach;**

(iii) **Building trust between investors and receivers by mobilizing sufficient resources, but at the same time implementing a good monitoring and reporting system.**

26. **Sustainable development means development that does not compromise the options of future generations. It is our responsibility to use and tend the natural resources we have left in a way that does not deprive our children of their right to meet their own needs, either now or in the future.**

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# Discussion paper contributed by the non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples major group

*Summary*

The global forest crisis continues unabated despite more than 13 years of global forest policy dialogue in the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (from 1995 to 1997), the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (from 1997 to 2000), the United Nations Forum on Forests (from 2000 onward) and in parallel discussions within the framework of legally binding instruments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the International Tropical Timber Agreement.

Much of the forest policy dialogue in those forums has been dominated either by discussion of the need for an international, legally (or non-legally) binding instrument or by preparations to discuss the need for such an instrument, to the detriment of precise and committed government action to halt the crisis. During the sixth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, Governments finally agreed to develop a non-legally binding instrument and at the seventh session, the United Nations Forum on Forests adopted that instrument and a multi-year programme of work for the Forum on Forests and the non-legally binding instrument for 2007-2015.

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The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change focuses much of its attention on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries as a contribution to climate change mitigation in general. However, there is increasing recognition that policies to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries could have significant impact on the rights and governance structures of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent peoples, especially as an agreement on such reductions might lead to significantly increased financial flows for forest policy. A main concern related to rights and equity is the risk that the benefits and costs of such emissions reduction initiatives will not be shared equitably with the indigenous peoples and local communities that have historically been responsible for the conservation and sustainable use of large tracts of forest and other carbon-rich ecosystems. It should also be ensured that policies to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries promote coherence between and compliance with various legally binding and non-legally binding instruments related to forests, including, in particular, the Convention on Biological Diversity. Representatives of non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations believe that it is necessary to ensure that immediate action is taken to halt the alarming destruction of forests worldwide and that those actions:

(a) Are consistent with international human rights instruments and the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(b) Recognize, respect and support the implementation of the customary rights of indigenous peoples and local communities that live in and/or depend on forests;

(c) Address the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, as well as the need for the readjustment of financial flows and the reduction of consumption;

(d) Establish genuine community forest governance that empowers forest and forest-dependent peoples;

(e) Address the perverse effects of the erroneous inclusion of monoculture tree plantations under the forest definitions of various United Nations entities such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Forum on Forests;

(f) Prohibit the use of market-distorting schemes such as forest and tree plantation certification by the Forest Stewardship Council that impact negatively on local people and biodiversity;

(g) Implement and provide ongoing economic support for community-based forest ecosystem restoration and rehabilitation as a major measure to address forest loss and degradation.

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# I. Introduction

1. The present discussion paper has been prepared by a coalition of non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations working together in the Global Forest Coalition. The Coalition (formerly known as the NGO Forest Working Group) was established in 1995 to bring the views of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and indigenous peoples' organizations to the various international forest policy forums and negotiations. The Coalition also facilitates the informed participation of NGOs and indigenous peoples' organizations in those processes, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

2. The global forest crisis continues unabated despite more than 13 years of global forest policy dialogue in the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (from 1995 to 1997), the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (from 1997 to 2000), the United Nations Forum on Forests (from 2000 onward) and in parallel discussions within the framework of legally binding instruments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the International Tropical Timber Agreement. Much of the forest policy dialogue in those forums has been dominated either by a discussion of the need for an international, legally (or non-legally) binding instrument or by preparations to discuss the need for such an instrument, to the detriment of precise and committed government action to actually halt the crisis affecting the world's forests and their peoples.

3. Governments are not much closer to implementing precise policies to address the crisis than they were 13 years ago; and since the United Nations Forum on Forests and its predecessors have failed to reverse the devastating trend, it remains unclear how such an instrument would be successful in addressing the issues that need to be tackled. During the sixth session of the Forum on Forests, Governments finally agreed to develop a non-legally binding instrument, and at the seventh session, it adopted that instrument and a multi-year programme of work for the Forum and the non-legally binding instrument for 2007-2015.

# II. Brief assessment of the implementation of relevant proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests

4. There have been numerous proposals for appropriate action by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests to address issues of concern to non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations involved in international forest policy negotiations, such as those dealing with the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, traditional forest-related knowledge, indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights, criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management and monitoring, assessment and reporting on implementation of policies and laws related to sustainable forest management, to name but a few.

5. Environment-related and community-based non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations have been actively involved in implementing some of those proposals for action. For example, during 1997 and 1998, together with the United Nations Environment Programme, several Governments and many local communities, seven regional workshops on the issue of underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation were organized by non-governmental organizations. In January 1999, two global workshops on the issue were organized: one in Ecuador exclusively devoted to indigenous peoples' views, and a global workshop involving all interested stakeholders in San José, Costa Rica. That process was set up to implement the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests proposal for action 27 (c). As a follow-up to those regional and global events, 15 national workshops were organized to address the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation. Workshops will be held on all continents.

6. In addition, NGOs and indigenous peoples' organizations initiated a series of independent monitoring exercises, assessing the level of implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests proposals for action. The results of that exercise were presented in condensed form in the 1998 report titled "Keeping the Promise" submitted for consideration by the United Nations Forum on Forests.

7. Additionally, non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations executed a similar independent monitoring process focusing on the implementation of the forest-related clauses of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which was presented at the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in 2002. The Global Forest Coalition prepared a similar exercise to address the implementation of forest-related obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and presented it at the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Montreal, Canada in November 2005. In 2008, the Global Forest Coalition produced a report on the implementation of the expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which was adopted in 2002 by 22 independent non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations in 22 different countries. Important conclusions of the reports included the need for improved policy coherence in the field of forests and inappropriate implementation of the expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity in most of the countries covered in the monitoring exercises.

8. Non-governmental organizations believe that the involvement of non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations in the implementation of some proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests was constructive and encouraging, as those proposals undertaken with their involvement are among the very few proposals fully implemented at the global level so far.

9. Non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations remain engaged in forums that offer participation opportunities and effective representation of civil society's views. However, there are serious constraints that hinder the desired modalities and the ability of groups to participate and contribute substantially to those processes, including inadequate financial provisions and restraining participation and accreditation rules of the Economic and Social Council, to name but a few, which discourage many interested non-governmental

organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations. Multi-stakeholder dialogues organized on the basis of modalities proposed by the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests have been seen by non-governmental organizations, indigenous peoples' organizations and other major groups as a way to segregate the input provided by those stakeholders. The proposals emanating from the non-governmental organization and indigenous peoples' organization perspective encompassed a more dynamic set-up for dialogue, which included at its core an attempt to report and debate issues related to implementation rather than the one-sided and non-action-oriented debates in which the Forum had engaged owing to lack of reporting commitments. Moreover, the results of those dialogues were rarely included in the reports of the Secretary-General. Most NGOs and indigenous peoples' organizations involved in the international forest policy debate think that multi-stakeholder dialogues are inappropriate vehicles through which to channel the views of civil society. Unless radical changes occur that allow for effective implementation of the proposals and views of major groups, the organization of those events is discouraged.

10. In order to take better advantage of the contributions by NGOs and indigenous peoples' organizations to the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument, NGOs and indigenous peoples' organizations, together with the other major groups, propose a major groups initiative in the form of an intersessional meeting to discuss ways to stop deforestation and forest degradation with the support of civil society. That meeting should take place by the end of 2009 or the beginning of 2010 and contribute to deliberations at the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests in 2011, which has been declared the International Year of Forests. The outcomes of the meeting could also contribute to other forest policy processes, in particular the discussions on reducing deforestation that take place under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the discussions on how to significantly reduce biodiversity loss within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Representatives of major groups, participants from Governments and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests will jointly discuss optimal ways of coopération with civil society at the local, national and global levels in order to put an end to the global forest crisis.

## III. Priority areas for action

11. The main constraints blocking effective action are undoubtedly the overwhelming influence of vested interests controlling the exploitation of forest resources, the equally grave lack of political will manifest in governmental attitudes towards forest conservation and sustainable use and an increasing trend of relying on the market to provide solutions, when in fact that is where many of the problems originate. The solution to the forest crisis should start with the implementation of existing commitments. In the past, non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations have expressed their fears that the negotiation of a forest convention could easily mean another lost decade without decisive action to stop and reverse forest loss. The recently adopted non-legally binding instrument will not contribute anything substantial to the current situation unless it explicitly addresses the following underlying causes of forest loss: lack of recognition of indigenous peoples' rights, unsustainable consumption and production patterns and unsustainable financial and trade flows.

12. Non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations are also deeply concerned about the lack of action by key actors, including Governments, intergovernmental organizations and the private sector, to curb the alarming rate of deforestation and forest degradation currently occurring. In addition to the need for emphasis on deforestation and forest degradation, another key area of concern for the forest sector is the lack of recognition of indigenous people and local communities based in or near forests and that depend on them. Without the full recognition of those rights and the implementation of corrective measures at all levels, any attempt to achieve sustainable forest management will be futile.

13. The rampant replacement of forests and other natural ecosystems with large-scale monoculture tree plantations, implemented following narrowly conceived productive and economic objectives and resulting in artificial constructs wrongly called "planted forests", is unequivocally a grave and direct cause of forest loss and degradation. The main reason for this is that the scientific paradigm of modern forestry is based upon ill-conceived definitions of forests, which introduce the erroneous assumption that forests can be replaced by artificial plantations. Through such an erroneous understanding of the nature of forests, a far-reaching plan for the speculative expansion of monoculture tree plantations has been devised and implemented worldwide. The pernicious effects of the plan represent an enormous threat to the last remaining forests.

14. A change of this convenient forestry paradigm is necessary if the last remaining natural forest ecosystems are to be saved. The reforestation efforts must be based on restoration of forests' natural attributes, which should be based on sound scientific and traditional knowledge, in a symbiotic assemblage that will reinstate ecological functionality and structure. Thus, the only proposals for action that would receive any support from most of the major groups are those directly devised to solve those issues.

15. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change focuses its attention on reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries as a contribution to climate change mitigation in general. There is increasing recognition that policies to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries might have substantial impacts on the rights and governance structures of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent peoples, especially as an agreement on such reductions might lead to significantly increased financial flows for the development of monoculture tree plantations, including of genetically modified trees, and the isolation of forests for exclusive conservation purposes. A main concern related to rights and equity is the risk that the benefits and costs of initiatives related to such reductions will not be shared equitably with the indigenous peoples and local communities that have historically been responsible for the conservation and sustainable use of large tracts of forests and other carbon-rich ecosystems.

# IV. Recommendations

16. **Non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations believe that it is necessary to ensure that immediate action to halt the alarming destruction of forests worldwide is taken at the local, national and global levels and that that action:**

**(a) Maintains consistency with international human rights and with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;**

**(b) Recognizes, respects and supports the implementation of the customary rights of indigenous peoples and local communities that are based in and depend on forests;**

**(c) Addresses the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, as well as the need for readjustment of financial flows and the reduction of consumption;**

**(d) Promotes genuine community forest governance that empowers forest peoples;**

**(e) Supports traditional forest-related knowledge;**

**(f) Takes into account the cultural and spiritual aspects of forests and develops approaches to deal with benefit-sharing in relation to forest-dependent communities;**

**(g) Establishes a financial mechanism that is accessible to indigenous peoples and local communities.**

**17. Any new forest conservation regime should:**

**(a) Ensure policy coherence and compliance between the various forest-related legally binding and non-legally binding instruments;**

**(b) Ensure full coherence between different international agreements in the field of forests and forest peoples' rights, including the Convention on Biological Diversity and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which requires innovative cooperative structures at the international and national levels between and among the institutions responsible for implementing those agreements;**

**(c) Contribute to the Convention on Biological Diversity target of significantly reducing biodiversity loss by 2010;**

**(d) Contribute to a more equitable climate regime by taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and ensuring compliance with the financial commitments made at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;**

**(e) Ensure that any emission reductions through forest conservation policies in developing countries are complementary to emission reductions in industrialized countries;**

**(f) Respect rights and address underlying causes;**

**(g) Ensure the full and effective participation and engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in all stages of the development and implementation of policies and projects to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries. In certain cases, that might imply revisiting policies that have been developed without such engagement;**

**(h) Ensure equitable treatment of indigenous peoples, communities and countries that have successfully conserved forests and/or reduced deforestation. That implies that incentives should be de-linked from emission reductions;**

**(i) Take into account the gender dimension of different policies and incentives to conserve forests and fully respect the rights and needs of women in forest policies;**

**(j) Respect traditional and local institutions for natural resource management, effective forms of representation in co-management bodies and participatory democracy in general;**

**(k) Address the underlying causes of forest loss, including those related to unsustainable consumption of such products as wood, paper, meat and transport fuels;**

**(l) Provide a broad range of positive incentives for indigenous peoples' territories and other lands occupied or used by indigenous peoples and local communities;**

**(m) Provide a broad range of social, cultural, legal and economic incentives for forest conservation and sustainable use, especially by indigenous peoples and local communities. Conservation is and should be part of cultural identity and pride; provide a broad range of social, cultural, legal and economic incentives for forest restoration;**

**(n) Ensure that incentive schemes and other forest policies recognize, respect and/or are based on the historical, territorial and use rights of indigenous peoples and local communities. Recognizing indigenous peoples' territories and community conserved areas has proved to be a successful and equitable strategy to conserve forests. In the Brazilian Amazon and in other regions, indigenous territories are the areas where deforestation has been most effectively reduced over the past decades;**

**(o) Ensure that incentive schemes and other forest policies recognize and support the significant contribution that the strategy of recognizing indigenous territories and community conserved areas makes to forest conservation;**

**(p) Ensure that such incentive schemes do not undermine the customary governance systems of indigenous peoples' territories and community conserved areas and the values that have led to their success in forest conservation.**

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# Discussion paper contributed by the scientific and technological community major group

*Summary*

The present discussion paper represents the contribution of the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions, the Forestry Research Network of sub-Saharan Africa, and the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre, in consultation with the International Union of Forest Research Organizations. It has benefited from substantial inputs from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

This paper:

(a) Provides a brief of overview of the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions, the Forestry Research Network of sub-Saharan Africa and the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre;

(b) Assesses priority areas for actions of Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions, the Forestry Research Network of sub-Saharan Africa and the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre, with a focus on the most pressing issues which need urgent action and on how future international arrangements could better address those issues;

(c) Assesses the contributions and influence of the United Nations Forum on Forests process in addressing issues of priority for the scientific and technological community major group, focusing on the global, regional and subregional activities and programmes directly or indirectly contributing to the application of the principles of guiding the work of the Forum;

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(d) Recommends a number of science and technology-related elements for a financing mechanism/framework for sustainable forest management;

(e) Presents a summary of recommendations on science and technology-related contributions to sustainable forest management.

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# I. Introduction

1. The present discussion paper has been prepared by the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions, the Forestry Research Network of sub-Saharan Africa, and the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre on behalf of the scientific and technological community major group for consideration by the United Nations Forum on Forests at its eighth session. It benefited from review comments by the International Union of Forest Research Organizations and from substantial inputs from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

2. The Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions is a non-governmental organization with over 60 members. Most of the national forest research institutions and many of the forestry schools in the Asia-Pacific region that are actively engaged in forestry and forest-related research are members of the Association. It seeks to be recognized as a dynamic, strong and self-reliant forestry research association in the Asia-Pacific region, promoting innovative research and development efforts in support of national, regional and community developments. The Association also acts as a chapter of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, and has collaborated in various activities with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Tropical Timber Organization, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry of the Government of Australia, the United States Department of Agriculture, and other regional and international agencies.

3. The Forestry Research Network of sub-Saharan Africa is a network of forestry research and academic institutions engaged in forestry and forest-related research in sub-Saharan Africa. The Network was established in 2000 as an umbrella body for three subregional networks: the Association of Forestry Research Institutions of East Africa, the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development, and the Research Unit of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate of the Southern African Development Community. The primary objectives of the Forestry Research Network of sub-Saharan Africa are: (a) advocacy for the role of forestry research in sustainable forest management; (b) promotion of functional partnerships among member institutions and strategic alliances with others in the field of forest research; (c) sharing and exchange of information, knowledge and experiences; and (d) articulating the views of Africa forestry research institutions in global policy processes.

4. The Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre is a regional research, education and development organization with 13 member countries, which has worked since 1973 to improve the livelihoods of rural people and protect the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean. Its mission is to contribute to rural poverty reduction by promoting competitive and sustainable agriculture and natural resource management, through higher education, research and technical cooperation. It is a regional platform for such global issues as food security and climate change. The Centre has strategic alliances with over 200 public and private institutions and contributes to policies at regional and international levels concerning, for example, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[1] the

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[2]/Clean Development Mechanism, the Convention on Biological Diversity,[3] the Central American Commission for Environment and Development, the Central American Council on Agriculture, and the Regional Agro-environmental Strategy. Since 2006, the Centre has served as regional coordinator for the International Union of Forest Research Organizations Special Programme for Developing Countries for Latin America and the Caribbean.

5. This discussion paper assesses (a) the most pressing science and technology-related issues that need to be urgently addressed in order to enhance sustainable forest management and meet the four global objectives on forests as set out in the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, endorsed by the United Nations Forum on Forests at its seventh session and subsequently adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/98 of 17 December 2007 and contained in the annex thereto and (b) how the United Nations Forum on Forests process has contributed to a wider understanding and resolution of those issues. The paper also makes recommendations regarding a financing mechanism/framework for sustainable forest management.

## II. Contributions of science and technology to achieving the global objectives on forests

6. In several of its sections, the non-legally binding instrument repeatedly emphasizes the important role of science and technology, including at the national policy level. In that regard, it was recommended that Member States:

- Analyse the causes of and address solutions to, threats to forest health and vitality from natural disasters and human activities, including threats from fire, pollution, pests, disease and invasive alien species (para. 6 (o))
- Strengthen the contribution of science and research in advancing sustainable forest management by incorporating scientific expertise into forest policies and programmes (para. 6 (r))
- Promote the development and application of scientific and technological innovations, including those that could be used by forest owners and local and indigenous communities to advance sustainable forest management (para. 6 (s)).

7. As regards science and technology within the context of enhancing international cooperation and means of implementation, it was recommended that to achieve the purpose of the non-legally binding instrument, Member States:

- Enhance and facilitate access to and transfer of appropriate, environmentally sound and innovative technologies and corresponding know-how relevant to sustainable forest management and to efficient value-added processing of forest products, in particular to developing countries, for the benefit of local and indigenous communities (para. 7 (k))

[2] Ibid., vol. 1771, No. 30822.
[3] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.

- Strengthen mechanisms that enhanced sharing among countries and the use of best practices in sustainable forest management, including through freeware-based information and communications technology (para. 7 (l))
- Strengthen national and local capacity in keeping with their conditions for the development and adaptation of forest-related technologies, including technologies for the use of fuelwood (para. 7 (m))
- Promote international technical and scientific cooperation, including South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, in the field of sustainable forest management, through the appropriate international, regional and national institutions and processes (para. 7 (n))
- Enhance the research and scientific forest-related capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, particularly the capacity of research organizations to generate and have access to forest-related data and information, and promote and support integrated and interdisciplinary research on forest-related issues, and disseminate research results (para. 7 (o))
- Strengthen forestry research and development in all regions, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, through relevant organizations, institutions and centres of excellence, as well as through global, regional and subregional networks (para. 7 (p))
- Strengthen cooperation and partnerships at the regional and subregional levels to promote sustainable forest management (para. 7 (q)).

# III. Priority areas for action

8. The present section identifies and assesses priority areas that need urgent attention in order to enhance sustainable forest management and meet the four agreed global objectives on forests. It also suggests ways in which the Forum could address these problems.

## A. Enhancing the interfacing of science and policy in forestry

9. The scientific and technological community major group wishes to continue to emphasize that enhancing the science-policy interface is key to sustainable forest management and critical to the successful implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action. Furthermore, it is necessary for the implementation of the various resolutions and decisions of the United Nations Forum on Forests. It is also critical to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and the four global objectives detailed in the non-legally binding instrument, which was endorsed during the seventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Recognizing that the necessary capability, capacity and research facilities are still weak in some developing States and most of the economically disadvantaged member States, the scientific and technological community major group wishes to see more concerted efforts and commitment by Governments, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and regional and subregional networks, as well as relevant multilateral environmental agreements,

instruments, processes and United Nations bodies, to strengthen the research-policy linkage by:

(a) Increasing the support provided to sound scientific knowledge-generation, and the development and adaptation of environment-friendly forest technologies contributing to sustainable forest management;

(b) Improving the capacity for mobilizing, packaging and enhancing the sharing and exchange of information, experiences and knowledge, including traditional knowledge and good practices, in forest resources assessment, conservation and utilization;

(c) Strengthening forestry education and training, as well as research and development;

(d) Strengthening the capacity of scientists and research organizations in developing and economically disadvantaged countries to participate effectively in initiatives and activities on science and technology in support of the United Nations Forum on Forests and other international forest forums and processes;

(e) Encouraging institutional mechanisms that facilitate the incorporation of proved research findings into policy frameworks to support the implementation of sustainable forest management, such as the reviewing of harvesting codes, forest policies, and timber standards in developing countries;

(f) Promoting appropriate mechanisms for greater participation of forest stakeholder groups, including indigenous groups, the local community, the scientific community, the private sector and civil society organizations, in the formulation and implementation of forest policies and best practices, and of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management;

(g) Facilitating the creation of an enabling environment for private sector investment in science and policy;

(h) Promoting the continued involvement of scientists in monitoring the implementation of national and international policies and creating opportunities for the results of monitoring to be discussed and incorporated in those policies.

## B. Enhancing the transformation of research outputs into usable information and technologies facilitating extension and adaptation

10. Effectively transforming research outputs into comprehensible, usable information and technologies in a timely manner could facilitate implementation and adaptation of, and increase the impact of sound scientific information on, forest policy and the sustainable management of forests so as to generate greater value and wealth creation for society. The scientific and technological community major group recognizes that research needs to further demonstrate the usefulness and contributions of forests and forest resources and to communicate its findings appropriately and effectively to end-users and in a more convincing manner.

11. To this end, actions in the following directions could be extremely helpful:

(a) Mobilizing resources for capacity-building on problem identification and analysis and project formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation so as

to improve the soundness of research projects and enhance the quality, especially the adaptability, of research outputs for policymaking;

(b) Capacity-building of individuals, national institutions and extension services, especially in developing countries, in respect of communicating research results that have been accurately translated into comprehensible and credible forms;

(c) Supporting information and knowledge management systems and networks that facilitate efficient and effective flow of scientific information among researchers, research institutions, policymakers and forestry practitioners and entrepreneurs;

(d) Developing mechanisms to strengthen the involvement and collaboration of all relevant stakeholders, other sectors, and local communities in the research formulation and implementation processes, in order to enhance technology uptake and prevent conflicts and instances of antagonism involving the State forestry apparatus and the citizenry, and to improve good governance, transparency and accountability in the forest sector.

## C. Streamlining and coordinating national, subregional and regional development priorities with internationally agreed global objectives on forests

12. Harmonizing national, subregional and regional priorities and strategies to ensure their alignment with internationally agreed global objectives and resolutions is challenging, as national priorities and strategies, particularly in the economically disadvantaged countries, favour utilization over conservation. The key to achieving harmonization is to pursue objectives based on an integrated concept of sustainable forest management which aims at achieving a good balance among environmental, social and economic objectives. To this end, the United Nations Forum on Forests should endeavour to:

(a) Promote programmes designed to demonstrate the potential opportunities in the different forest-related conventions and agreements, outstanding examples of which are the Clean Development Mechanism and the relatively new mechanism for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries. Because of their complexity, these mechanisms are not always well understood, especially with regard to the opportunities to fully benefit from them that they hold out to developing and economically disadvantaged countries;

(b) Promote and support, through, for example, responsible acquisition policies, increased use of market mechanisms, such as forest certification, that favour wood and non-wood forest products derived from sustainably managed resources;

(c) Encourage national, subregional and regional collaboration in formulating and implementing projects of common interest through the pooling of resources and capacities and in partnership with international institutions and member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests;

(d) Assist in identifying appropriate financing mechanisms for ecosystem services, especially in developing countries;

(e) Promote the involvement of scientists in the development and impact monitoring of market and finance mechanisms;

(f) Promote analysis of the impact of deforestation in different national and international policies that considers, in particular, the contradictions between forest policies and export, land tenure and agricultural production-related policies.

## D. Effective mobilization of funding for forestry research, education and extension

13. A fourth important priority area for action is the mobilization of adequate funding for forest research, education and extension, especially and most urgently in developing and economically disadvantaged countries. The poor progress in the implementation of international conventions and arrangements on forests has often pointed to a persistent lack of funding. The inadequate capacity for effective disbursements and efficient utilization of the often limited funds further erodes the quality of potential outputs. The nature of the demands for funds encompasses a wide diversity, and those demands are often complicated by the need to adjust national strategies so as to align them with donor priorities.

14. Funds are critically needed for, inter alia, securing food, alleviating poverty, conserving fragile ecosystems, enhancing biological diversity and mitigating climate change. Far-reaching actions and initiatives to promote sustainable forest management require substantial and long-term investments. To achieve this, efforts of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the international community would be helpful. Such efforts should entail:

(a) Looking seriously at ways to reverse the decline in official development assistance (ODA) for sustainable forest management; and mobilizing significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management, as clearly stated in global objective 4 of the non-legally binding instrument agreed during the seventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. In this respect, a broad array of financing mechanisms and instruments designed to capture funds from local, national, international, public and private sources are necessary. The Forum may consider promoting the discussion of the training module on financing mechanisms for sustainable forest management developed by Wageningen International, FAO and the National Forest Programme Facility in developing countries;

(b) Enhancing awareness that responsible forest management would not contribute to deforestation. As long as consumers in Western countries consider that the harvest of any tropical timber contributes to deforestation, it will be difficult for their Governments to support management of natural forests or even plantations. It is therefore essential that the United Nations Forum on Forests support efforts by scientists and other forest sector stakeholders to show the real impacts of the use of tropical timber derived from responsibly managed forests and plantations, indicating that this is often a better option for forest conservation than other forms of land use or protection;

(c) Strengthening and supporting the development of research and learning institutions and local capacities in developing and economically disadvantaged countries so as to reduce the high dependency on "overseas" experts;

(d) Seriously assessing the conventional project-based approach used to achieve conservation impacts and livelihood improvement. Project-based interventions are limited in respect of time, space and number of beneficiaries, while most forest cover loss is the result of the land and resource use practices of large numbers of people distributed over large areas and acting over a long period of time. A paradigm shift from using short-term instruments to using non-project models in addressing long-term problems is urgently needed;

(e) Requesting an independent analysis of the impacts of the World Bank's 2001 forest policy;

(f) Supporting an effective regional research cooperation effort and networking efforts among national science organizations, the Collaborative Partnership of Forests and other international scientific organizations, which would provide the necessary framework for enhancing the participation of science and policy specialists, especially from the economically disadvantaged countries, in international forest-related processes and initiatives including the United Nations Forum on Forests. The Forum should therefore assist in the development of a mechanism to ensure that scientists from economically disadvantaged countries have a voice in international forest and related processes;

(g) Supporting forestry research in the tropics to address the issue of continued deforestation and forest degradation and their adverse impact on the environment and on the livelihoods of millions of people (including many of the poorest and most vulnerable);

(h) Given that science and technology research and development funding in many developing countries is still lower than 1 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP) and that there is also an absence of a formal science and technology policy in many countries to foster the institutionalization of science and coordination of scientific activities, the United Nations Forum on Forests should support the development of solutions through:

(i) Partnering with the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in assisting in the development of a science and technology policy framework to aid socio-economic development;

(ii) Promotion of transfer of technologies and institutional and technical capacities to implement sustainable forest management;

(iii) Promotion of the pursuit of broad-based science and technology development as a major driving force for overall national economic and social development;

(iv) Development of appropriate science and technology structures for efficiency and effectiveness;

(v) Promotion of the use of science and technology to rapidly address the challenge of socio-economic development so as to improve the quality of life;

(vi) Support for national socio-economic development goals with the penetration of a science and technology culture into all levels of society;

(vii) Promotion of proved technologies and their application in industry to support rural development on the various continents.

# IV. Brief assessment of how the United Nations Forum on Forests process has addressed issues of priority for the scientific and technological community major group

15. The crucial role played by science and technology has been recognized and highlighted in United Nations decisions since 2002. There are many examples of successful use of scientific and technological advances to combat rampant deforestation and forest degradation in various countries.

16. The non-legally binding instrument, endorsed during the seventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, had called for a strengthening of the contributions of science and research, including forest-related traditional knowledge, through the incorporation of scientific expertise into forest policies and programmes. While resolutions are welcomed on enhancing research and scientific forest-related capacities of developing countries, promotion of collaborative research, support from developed countries, South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, the need for those resolutions to be translated into concrete actions and programmes must be further emphasized. Innovative field-level initiatives, such as the Joint Collaborative Partnership on Forests Initiative on Science and Technology, the Global Forest Expert Panels, and the National Forest Programme Facility hosted by FAO could be the fundamental building blocks of further programmes.

17. Indeed, at the global level, in line with the United Nations Forum on Forests process and its recommendations, several innovative initiatives have been established in recent years to facilitate communication among scientists, policymakers and other stakeholders with a view to improving science-policy interaction. These initiatives have included (a) intergovernmental forums and subsidiary advisory bodies; (b) task-oriented expert groups set up by forest-related global conventions, instruments and organizations; (c) the Collaborative Partnership of Forests; (d) the Multi-stakeholder dialogue; (e) increased cooperation between the scientific community and international organizations, leading to key informative publications, such as the FAO *State of the World's Forests* reports, and the International Tropical Timber Organization *Criteria and Indicators for the Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests*.

18. Similarly, at regional and subregional levels, many regional and international organizations and agencies have launched and implemented various initiatives, which directly or indirectly address the issues of generating, disseminating and utilizing forest-related knowledge.

19. A number of regional and subregional partnership initiatives have emerged in recent years to facilitate more effective coordination and consultation between countries and donor agencies and development partner countries. The recently launched Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APFNet), hosted by the State Forestry Administration of China, is an example of such an initiative at the regional level. Other notable examples in the Asia-Pacific region would include the various programmes on poverty reduction and community forestry initiated by regional organizations such as the Asia Forest Partnership and the Asia Forest Network. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community assists in building the capacity of the Pacific island nations to better manage their forest and tree resources and to effectively participate in regional and international forums. Along the same lines, subregional initiatives such as the Association of

Southeast Asian Nations and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation have, in recent years, regularly increased their coordinating roles in tackling subregional and transboundary forestry-related issues.

20. Regional and subregional forest information promotion initiatives and research networks have been established to strengthen research capacities and promote collaboration and efficient provision and sharing of relevant information, with the overall goal of strengthening science-policy interaction for sustainable forest management. The Asia Pacific Forest Genetic Resources Programme, established by Bioversity International and the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions, and currently hosted by the latter, and the Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network, are but a few examples of regional forest research-related networks.

21. In Africa, the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission, the African Forest Forum and the African Forest Research Network continue to champion the cause of sustainable forest management in the region. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/57/304, annex) and the African Union have natural resources development programmes and initiatives creating opportunities for consultations between countries and development partners. In the Central African subregion, the Central African Forest Commission has become an important vehicle for promoting cooperation in sustainable forest management among member countries.

22. In Latin America, interesting initiatives for science-policy interaction exist through the support provided by the Tropical Agricultrual Research and Higher Education Centre to the Central American Commission for Environment and Development and contribute to the regional strategy on agriculture and the environment, as well as to the strategy for adaptation to climate change. As in Asia, a regional network for genetic resources was recently created by Bioversity International (name: the Latin American Forest Genetic Resources Network). In a number of countries, valuable experiences are being accumulated on sustainable forest management (see case studies of FAO) and certification (over 11 million hectares have been Forest Stewardship Council-certified and about 2 million have been certified under the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes). Latin America also hosts a number of innovative mechanisms for paying for environmental services (for example, in Costa Rica). The Ibero-American Model Forest Network is an outstanding example of a mechanism designed to support responsible management of the natural resources within a territorial context. These initiatives are mainly implemented by national and regional research and education centres. The fact that many of them still require long-term data collection points to one of the main weaknesses in the development of forest policies and forestry development programmes; however, very few funding sources are prepared to finance projects oriented towards long-term data collection. Networks for such data collection such as the Costa Rica Permanent Sample Plot network (coordinated by the National University) and the institute of the Amazon Initiative in Brazil are extremely important but extremely underfunded.

23. Indeed, lack of funding seems to have affected the operations of many of the regional and subregional networks. Considering that these networks are the key vehicles for interaction among the institutions and scientists, the Forum secretariat is called upon to provide special assistance for the revitalization and optimal operation of these networks in particular umbrella bodies such as the Forestry

Research Network of sub-Saharan Africa in Africa, the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions in Asia and the Pacific and the Ibero-American Model Forest Network in Latin America, to mention just a few.

24. At the national level, a number of initiatives have emerged in recent years, mainly through partnership with the National Forest Programme Facility hosted by FAO. Indeed, in line with recommendations of the United Nations Forum on Forests designed to encourage increased multi-stakeholder participation in sustainable forest management, the National Forest Programme Facility has successfully mobilized the participation of civil society organizations and local communities and individuals in forest policy formulation and implementation in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America.

## V. Recommendations on a financing mechanism/framework for sustainable forest management

25. Science and technology, when properly developed and utilized, can play a vital role in the formulation and implementation of forest policy for sustainable forest management. This has been already recognized, both by Agenda 21[4] (chaps. 31 and 35) and by the United Nations Forum on Forests, in having included the issue of forest-related scientific knowledge in the agenda of several of its previous sessions.

26. However, future international agreements/arrangements need to go beyond just recognizing the importance of science and technology. A funding mechanism/framework for sustainable forest management should:

- Support the means to enhance the interface between science and policy
- Support greater extension and adoption/adaptation of research results
- Facilitate and finance capacity-building in research and development
- Support joint initiatives on science and technology to strengthen the contribution of research to a more informed decision-making at the global level
- Support the application of scientific and technological innovations as well as traditional forest knowledge that would help indigenous and local communities undertake sustainable forest management
- Support national poverty alleviation/reduction strategies so as to free limited resources for subsequent channelling into the sustainable management of natural resources
- Support subregional and regional initiatives/programmes designed to tackle multinational, transboundary forest-related problems and issues, such as haze and invasive species
- Support regional databases, information clearing houses and directories to facilitate effective flows of information at all levels of decision-making and resources conservation and utilization.

[4] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

27. Recognizing that the demands for support from different regions, subregions and nations, can be very diverse in character and also that there are different levels of capacity and capability in respect of formulating projects to effectively utilize the funds required, the mechanism/framework should:

- Support capacity-building programmes in project formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- Harmonize funding priorities so as to align them with regional, subregional and national priorities
- Support and facilitate succession plans to ensure sustainability of funded activities which may be jeopardized by the frequent staff movements prevailing in developing countries
- Simplify procedures for funding applications without compromising technical quality.

28. In addition, it is extremely important that, considering the long-term nature of forest-related research, the United Nations Forum of Forests work on the development of proposals for sustainable sources of funding for such research.

## VI. Conclusions and recommendations

29. **Achieving sustainable management of the world's forests and forest resources is certainly one of the greatest challenges facing the world today. The international community should consider adopting and implementing drastic recommendations, which would include putting real power and commitment behind the proposed elements of the non-legally binding instrument in order to facilitate their implementation. With regard to the proposals for action related to science and technology, it is recommended that:**

(a) **The commitment should be affirmed to invest in strengthening forest research capacities and support research networks and activities, in particular in developing and economically disadvantaged countries, so that science and research can make a difference to real-life problems through the timely delivery of utilizable science-based solutions;**

(b) **Appropriate support from Governments, members of the Collaborative Partnership of Forests and other international organizations be mobilized to assist regional and subregional forest research networks involved in building forest research capacities and improving communication, information-sharing and networking among forest scientists, research institutions, universities, policymakers, local communities and other stakeholders in the forest and other land-based sectors;**

(c) **Such support should be of a long-term, programme-based nature, rather than take the form of short-term projects.**

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## Discussion paper contributed by the farmers and small forest landowners Major Group

*Summary*

Large parts of the world's forests are managed by forest owners and community forestry. Most of the properties and managed areas are small or medium-sized. Family forestry and community forestry work to secure sustainable forest development. The organization of forest owners and community forestry is vital to enabling the small and medium-sized properties to be economically viable and carefully managed and to providing an essential contribution to local livelihood. The importance of forest owners' organizations and the economic cooperation among family and community foresters needs to be recognized and supported. Together with secure property and land tenure rights, organizations controlled by the active foresters themselves are a prerequisite for sustainable management in a changing environment concerned with forests and biodiversity. The foresters must be enabled to organize themselves and to avoid "being organized" by others. Reciprocal cooperation with industry, State forests and Governments is vital, however, and in the common interest.

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# I. Introduction

1. Large parts of the world's forest are managed by family forestry, personal forest owners and community forestry. The exact numbers are not known, but in many parts of the world 60 per cent or more of the area and forest volume are managed by small owners and communities. Family forest owners share the same values and visions and the same long-term commitment and combine utilizing the resources with maintaining the diverse functions of the forest. Economic, ecologic and social considerations are inherited through generations and reflect the local dependence on the economic and protective functions of forests. This is the hallmark of true sustainable forestry.

2. The people responsible for the daily activities within forests need to be taken into account and directly involved in international forest policy discussions. Very often, international processes are dominated by those who talk about forests, not those who practise forestry. The active foresters need to be "talked with" and not only "talked to" or "talked about".

3. The only way to manage sustainably the vast majority of small properties is by organizing them through their interests and their practical and economic activities and securing a global voice for the organizations concerned. The organizations must be able to ensure effective economic activity, providing support to the foresters through implementing education and knowledge transfer and advocating their interests in local and international arenas.

4. Local network and communities are strong forces when they constitute the foundation of their own organizations. The prerequisite, however, is that these organizations be controlled by the foresters themselves and not some outside forces organizing the forest owners. On the other hand, economic cooperation with industry and cooperation with State forests and Governments are highly important in respect of forming, developing and maintaining the organizations. The building of strong organizations for forest owners and community forestry will be in the best interest of industry, State forests and Governments. This is the only way to ensure sustainable forest management and efficient and responsible forestry covering large areas of smallholdings.

5. It is also important to recognize international contexts — the different conditions under which forestry is conducted all over the world. If some parts of the world face serious threats of deforestation, others, for example, Europe and North America, are confronted with the problem of underutilization of forests as a renewable resource. If some parts of the world lack forest owners' organizations, other parts have highly functional organizations and economic cooperatives. An important challenge for the international discussion is to recognize the variety of conditions and build on the mix of contributions from all types of forest owners' organizations. We know that the strongest forest owners' organizations are those with members of different sizes, including small and medium-sized forest owners, who cooperatively share their economic and political strengths.

# II. Forests in a changing environment

6. Sustainable forest management is the best way of securing the existence of robust forests in a changing environment. It is important to remember that

consideration of the three components of sustainable forestry — economic, ecologic and social — requires the achievement of a balance. The main forces that contribute to sustainable development will also prepare the forest for changes and may activate forces that combat negative development, promote adaptation to the actual situation and utilize the possibilities for change. This is only possible under conditions of well-organized forestry.

7. An important part of achieving sustainable forest management is the availability of cost-effective and affordable group forest certification to well-organized small and medium-sized forest owners' and community forest organizations. This has proved highly effective in some countries already.

## A. Forests and climate change

8. The effects of climate change are very important and the forest must be regarded not only as part of the problem, but also as an important part of the solution. The long-term positive effects of active forestry, the growth of renewables and the use of environmentally friendly forest products must be stimulated. This must include support for and recognition of the important roles of forest organizations in the mitigation of climate change. The substitution effect of forest products and the promotion of wood could also be channelled through the organizations.

## B. Reversing the loss of forest cover, preventing forest degradation and combating desertification

9. The problems of loss of forest cover and the prevention of forest degradation are often caused by poverty and forces operating outside the forest sector. Short-term solutions, involving buying off the "symptoms" of forest loss and degradation, may be found. The long-term solution, however, is to build sustainable forest management and ensure that forest management depends on local people by building the capacity of family and community forestry through the securing of property rights and land tenure rights and fostering long-term viable forestry. Once again, the formation and development of forest organizations constitute a key instrument in achieving these goals. Without proper organizations, the support for local forestry is not possible in the long term.

## C. Forests and biodiversity conservation, including protected areas

10. Forest and biodiversity conservation is an important part of sustainable forest management. In promoting sustainable management, family and community forestry also achieves forest and biodiversity conservation. This phenomenon might include protected areas. On the other hand, the protection of areas must take into consideration the elements of a viable economy, local livelihoods and social considerations. The restrictions and compensations must be discussed with family forestry and community forestry organizations as equal partners.

## III. Means of implementation for sustainable forest management

11. Though their role and the benefits accruing from their operation, forest owner associations and cooperatives are instrumental in building capacity and enabling local communities and the small and medium-sized forest owners to fulfil the goals linked to securing sustainable forest management. The means of implementation must build on the work of existing organizations and local networks and communities. Existing organizations operating in parts of the world where economic cooperation is strong today must enter into a dialogue in order that knowledge and experience may be shared. It is also vital to utilize local knowledge and experience in combination with scientific knowledge and modern principles of organization and technology.

12. Industry must be given a role in, and responsibility for, supporting forest owners' organizations in the management and effective collection of harvest from smallholding areas. State forest must be obliged to support private forestry and its organizations so as to secure the mutual benefit of sustainable management in larger areas. Industry must behave in a way that is supportive of the efforts of small, medium-sized and large landowners to join the same organizations and must promote wood procurement through such organizations, which, in the medium term, will deliver the most cost-effective and stable wood supply built on sustainable management of larger areas than those of today.

13. Central, regional and local governments must take on the responsibility for supporting the foresters' formation of their own organizations and must enable them to grow, counsel their members and build educational capacity.

## IV. Conclusions and recommendations

14. **The support of sustainable forest management is the key to securing forests in a changing environment. Sustainable forest management will generate lasting solutions.**

15. **The key to sustainable forest management in areas with small and medium-sized forest holdings is to support the formation and development of forest owners' and community forest organizations. Industry, State forest and Governments have special roles and responsibilities.**

16. **Forest certification connected to effective group certification in forest owners' and community forest organizations should be supported as a tool for securing and documenting sustainable forest management.**

17. **The international community must encourage existing forest owners' organizations to enter into a true dialogue. Intergovernmental organizations must recognize the need to "talk with" and not "talk to" or "talk about" the real actors in today's forestry. In international consultations, the input of representatives of active forestry must be given more weight than advice given to international organizations by those without responsibility or an active engagement.**